KILLING MOON

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SAM RAIMI INTERVIEW

NEWS ON EVIL DEAD III & IV

EYE STABBING ON FILM

NEKRO 2 CONTEST

HONG KONG MOVIES

THE DEAD NEXT DOOR

ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS

THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM.

&

ARGENTO'S FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET

JORG BUTTGERIET INTERVIEW

VILLAINS of the PEICE
(EDITORIAL)

Hi there and welcome to the very first issue of KILLING MOON, my own contribution to the bulging horror fanzine scene which just seems to get bigger by the day ! I hope this humble effort finds a little place in your darkened soul and that you will support it in the future - if it has one!!

I've sweated over my little typewriter for ages putting together this one and amidst the typing errors(for which I apologise greatly but it was the damn machine, honest!!) I hope it shows. I've also tried to make it as varied as possible with interviews, features, reviews, Hong Kong movies and general news. Hopefully I have succeeded in doing this but only you can be the judge of that.

If you can think of something that should fill the pages of KILLING MOON please let me know. Infact, write to me anyway as I'd love to hear from all of you. A feature of this zine in the future will be CLASSIC CORNER - a section where any of you wonderful readers can send a 300 - 500 word review of your favourite genre film or films, if you can synopsize them all in one go. I know I couldn't, I'd rave on for pages about DAWN OF THE DEAD, THE EVIL DEAD, FREAKS, THE BEYOND, DEEP RED and other personal favs. This section is yours so get scribbling and remember also that any contributions are more than welcome.

With luck KILLING MOON will be quarterly, maybe even bi-monthly as I have loads of stuff lined up including tentative interviews with Scott Spiegel, Lloyd Kaufman, Lucio Fulci and David Lynch, features on the greatest scaremakers of all time(Hitchcock, Bava, Argento etc) a section devoted to Japanese animation and horror and the usual digestable amounts of reviews and moans! Plus better more discursive editorials!!

Well I had better stop waffling for now or I'll put you all to sleep before you start reading the zine. I'd just like to say that I hope you enjoy the zine and maybe you'll grab KILLING MOON #2 when it appears in early January 1992. Until then, take care and have a nice festive season and don't drink too much!

Alex

My greatest thanks go to Sam Raimi, Jorg, Manfred Jelinski, David Burns, Toshiyuki, Nico at CULT VIDEOS, Pete, Dave Bryan, and anyone else I've forgotten to mention plus all who helped with, stocks, bought or read KILLING MOON. Cheers!

Thanx also to Lorraine for the help with the Raimi interview

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PIECES

Teaser trailers have been released in the States for the mega-secret ALIEN III. All they reveal is that "On Earth Everyone Can Hear You Scream"!! Can't wait. It's now due to open in the U.S. in late January after being post-poned from an initial summer release and then a Christmas one due production problems.

Dario Argento is currently working on his new picture, AURA'S ENIGMA, and says it will shock censorship groups around the world as he's fed up (who isn't) with his films being cut. Let's just hope the story is a darn sight better than OPERA.

David Cronenberg's first film since DEAD RINGERS(1988) is the long awaited, promising, adaptation of the controversial novel THE NAKED LUNCH. It opens in the U.S. in the New Year and is scheduled for an April release in the U.K.

I took the chance of going to see Ridley Scott's BLADE RUNNER again when a local cinema recently screened it. Much to my surprise it was the "uncut" version with all the extra stuff contained in the unrated U.S. cassette. Apparently this is a new print issued last year and is worth seeing for the extended eye-gouging and nail-thru-the-hand alone!

After the success of CHIMERA(which I though was so-so, but admittedly better than most of the garbish on weekend TV) ITV are going to film another Stephen Gallagher novel, DOWN RIVER, with plans to film his other books RAIN and OKTOBER at a later date.

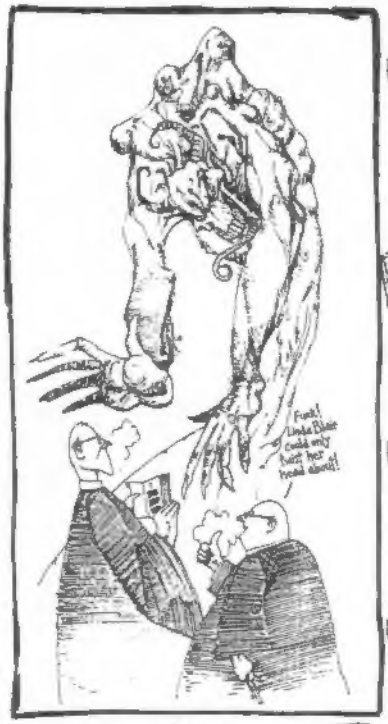
The multi-talented actor-producer-writer-puppetmaker-editor-director Peter Jackson is currently filming his third film BRAIN DEATH. Let's hope it's as good as his brilliant first two features BAD TASTE and MEET THE FEEBLES.Talking of FEEBLES it was recently screened to a rather bemused audience at the Edinburgh Film Festival as MEET THE FEEBLES, although Colourbox supposedly plan to release it as BAD TASTE 2! I just wonder if the BBFC will touch it

Can you believe someone is actually making HELL COMES TO FROGTOWN II ? No. Well they are, sadly. Robert(MANIAC COP 2)Z'Dar and Brion James star.

The recent U.K. release of John McNaughton's brilliant and disturbing HENRY:PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER was not as butchered as one may expect. The infamous vidoe camera scene recieved three brief cuts by the BBFC and the shot of the prostitute in the opening sequence was removed entirely by the European rights holder. Nevertheless the audience I saw it with were still shocked, especially by the comb in Otis's eye and the removal of his head in the bathroom which recieved moans of disgust from certain members. Perhaps more disturbing than any of this was Glasgow District Council's attempt to ban HENRY! HAven't those gits got anything better to do than sit around on the asses and dictate their idiotic beliefs on cinema going Glaswegians. These people banned MONTY PYTHON'S LIFE OF BRIAN from Glasgow cinemas for Christ sake.

Next year should see the British video release of Micheale Soavi's THE CHURCH and THE SECT, both scoped and in English! Also, rumours have it that CIC do plan to release Dario Argento(who of Course produced both Soavi films)'s often forgotten(and reviewed later in this very zine!) FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET on sell-thru in the Spring of 1992. Watch out for that one.

You probably all know about this and indeed you'll probably all be there(I might even be, if I can scrape together the coach fair down that is!) but I'd thought it would be nice(!)of me to mention Cinema From Three Continents at the Scala Cinema in London on October 26. The films are Tsui Hark's brill A BETTER TOMORROW 3, NEKROMANTIK 2(Jorg himself will be there) and CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH 2. All three of these will be reviewed in KILLING MOON #2(plug! plug!)



Horror sequels abound with CHILD'S PLAY 3 and ELM STREET 6:THE FINAL NIGHTMARE(in 3-D!) just opening in the States and STEPFATHER 3, TOXIC AVENGER IV, SCARECROWS 2, SCANNERS 3(with SCANNERS 2 just being released on video in the UK),HELLRAISER III:HELL ON EARTH and CHILDREN OF THE CORN 2(why?) all curently in production. The question is will any of 'em be any good ? The truth - unlikely.

For a bit of a change I personally suggest you all buy John Muth's superb comic book adaptation of Fritz Lang's 1931 classic "M". The books capture the true eerie feelings of Lang's masterpiece and make a good diversion from the gore comics that are bursting onto the market today. If you want real horror buy "M" now - you won't be disappointed.

(ALEX J. LOW)

Psychotic Sounds

SUSPIRIA

soundtrack, by SIMON O'CONNOR

Anyone who has seen "Suspira" cannot help but be impressed with the film's visual flair and it's penchant for stylish, elaborately staged murder scenes but one cannot deny that the film's main driving force is the music score so effectively conjured by The Goblins with director Dario Argento.

As early as the opening credits, the music establishes itself with an aggressive drum-roll - anticipating the horrors to come. This then fades into a surreal, almost hallucinatory synthesized melody which perfectly realizes the nightmarish elements upon which the film is built. This main theme appears throughout the movie insuring that the dream-like quality it creates never relents. Another unique touch is the chanting of the word 'WITCH' at varied stages during the opening sequences. Serving as a warning of what lies ahead, this also acts as a creative means of relaying details of the story via the music.

Apart from the synthesized music there are vocal effects used too. Howling voices are heard during the murder scenes and in the moments preceding them. These are joined by a frantic, electronic pounding, which emphasises the terror and the panic as the executions take place. At other points in the film these are backed with the strumming of an electric guitar.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the soundtrack of "Suspiria" is the sheer volume of it. Suspiria is an Italian word meaning whispers, which might imply hush and silence but this is definetely not the case. All of the films key moments are underscored with tremendous ferocity and may boast the loudest music ever heard on film. In cinemas and in full stereo, the results are deafening but on small screen the music(and the film itself) is inevitably somewhat restrained. Even so, big screen or small, "Suspiria" has a wonderful soundtrack and credit must go to Argento and The Goblins for combining their talents with maximum effect.

Interview with a Corpse Fucking Artist

Introduction by ALEX J. LOW

Interview by ALEX J. LOW and LORRAINE SINNOTT

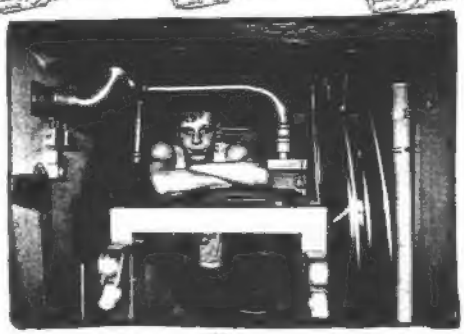
With his debut feature film, NEKROMANTIK German film maker Jorg Buttgereit went from virtual obscurity to become a household name. Well in the houses of horror fans anyway! The 1987 production turned the taboo subject of necrophilia into art and won high critical praise and a strong cult following throughout the world. A great achievement for a film made on "no-budget". NEKROMANTIK tells the tale of Bob and Betty, a rather strange couple with several weird habits including(of course) wanting to fuck corpses. This little dream comes true one day when Bob brings home a decomposing body and both begin to make love with it. Bob then loses his job and Betty leaves him taking the corpse with her, much to the disappointment of Bob. The film then concentrates on Bob's struggle for happines and satisfaction and to his eventual, inevitable downfall.

One of the successes of NEKROMANTIK is it's upfront approach and ability to deal directly with a little dealt with and interesting subject. The same can be said of Buttgereit's next feature DER TODESKING, which was originally titled "Seven Suicides"

Again, he deals with a taboo subject and succeeds in creating not only a good but a truly original film, which is a visual bombardment of bizarre images. TODESKING centres on how once dead nobody actually cares anymore; the media only care about the actual death. It is certainly one of the most powerful and controversial independent films of recent time.

Previous to these two features Buttgereit had been making short films for quite a while; ranging from the over-the-top absurdity of CAPTAIN BERLIN(a new kind of superhero indeed!) to the pre-Nekromantik HOT LOVE.Buttgereit was also involved in Micheal Brynntop's 1986 epic JESUS:DER FILM. This massive production involved twenty German film makers, each commissioned to shoot a segment of the New Testament. Quite fittingly Buttgereit filmed the crucifixion scene in which Jesus has vampire-teeth and gets staked through the heart.

Two years after DER TODESKING Buttgereit has made his third feature. Described by Dave Bryan of "Black Sunday" as "the most infamous sequel of all time" it is of course(no, not ANNIE 2!) NEKROMANTIK 2. Sure to gather as strong a following as the first film it picks up from where NEKROMANTIK left off and our "hero" from the first film is dug up and is the corpse of the sequel. However the twist here is that it is not beloved Betty who removes



Our man Jorg

him from the earth but another connoiseur of necrophilia(played by the gorgeous Monika M.) who then has to make the tough decision between real love or real dead love. And so the film's main question remains - what is real love anyway ?

Well, enough of my nattering. here's the brief but fun interview with Jorg Buttgereit - a promising new film maker with strong messages who has much to offer the genre and who will hopefully continue to churn out his nightmares, thoughts and bizarre, original visions for years to come.

Moon:WHAT WERE THE FIRST FILMS YOU WORKED ON ?

Jorg:I did lots of Super8 films with friends; genre parodies etc. They were mostly funny movies. They sometimes show them on children's programmes here in Germany.

Moon:WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS FROM ?

Jorg:I get my ideas from life and true crime books.

Moon:DID/DO YOU HAVE PROBLEMS GETTING PEOPLE TO TAKE YOUR FILM IDEAS SERIOUSLY ?

Jorg:I don't even take my work or ideas that seriously!!

Moon:HAVE YOU BEEN INFLUENCED BY ANY PARTICULAR FILMS OR FILM MAKERS ?

Jorg:No, I don't think so. But you get influenced by so many things you don't even recognise what in particular.I love Godzilla movies though.

Moon:MOST PEOPLE HAVE A TERRIBLE FEAR OF DEATH, BUT THROUGH "NEKROMANTIK" and "DER TODESKING" IT SEEMS THAT YOU HAVE AN OBSESSION WITH DEATH. IS THIS TRUE AND IF SO.WHAT DO YOU FIND SO APPEALING ABOUT DEATH ?

'Try to take my Brolly again and your head's jam'

Being a corpse isn't all bad

Jorg:I guess the same terrible fear is inside of me. I am just trying to understand death through my films. The more you get into something the more familiar it becomes.

Moon:HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR FILMS BEING CUT, FOR INSTANCE THE CASTRATION SCENE IN "DER TODES-KING" ?

Jorg: Hate it. You know why.

WHAT SORT OF BUDGETS ARE YOU FILMS MADE ON ?

Jorg:"Der Todesking" was twice as expensive as "Nekromantik" but still so cheap you can't tell anybody. "Nekromantik 2" was made on the same size of budget as "Todesking".

Moon:ARE YOU SURPRISED THAT BOTH OF YOUR FILMS HAVE BECOME SUCH SUCCESSES AND HAVE BEEN SO HIGHLY PRAISED IN THE GENRE ?

Jorg:Yes, a little bit. The problem is that a cult status can't pay you back the money it cost to make such a film. On the other hand if you look at other self-made genre films it's mostly that boring stalk 'n' slash theme. you cannot earn fame with that kind of limited message.

Moon:HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT VIOLENCE TOWARD ANIMALS IN FILMS ?

Jorg:I like the idea of feeling guilty about such scenes. However, it depends on the circumstances this kind of footage comes into the movie. If the animals are not tortured or killed for the movie, I can't find a reason not to show it. It is one of the ugly sights of death around in our world.

Moon:WHERE DO YOU FIND YOUR ACTORS AND ACTRESSES ?

Jorg:Most of them are friends and people I know. I like to work with people who know and understand what I mean. Sometimes, like for "Nekromantik 2" we had to make a casting for the lead role.

Moon:IS GERMANY A GOOD BASE FOR A FILM MAKER ?

Jorg:No it is not. Especially not for horror film makers.

Moon:HOW DID THE WORLD PREMIERE OF "NEKROMANTIK 2" GO ? CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE FILM ?

Der Gorilk

Jorg: It starts with the last frame of "Nekromantik 1" and the story continues straight on. Just wait and see!

The serious critics moaned a lot, as ever, on "Nekro 2" - I guess it's the old sequel problem - but most of the audience seemed to like it. Women especially liked the film which satisfies me a lot cause it shows me that we managed to make the movie from the main actress's point of view. and it also shows that we managed to make a movie with sex without abusing our actress.

Moon: ARE YOU WORKING ON ANYTHING NEW AT THE MOMENT ?

Jorg: I am thinking about doing a documentary of my last three films. Sort of a "making of" film. It will be called "CORPSE FUCKING ART".

...and let's just hope it's as good as his past features. For this interview my thanks go to Jorg, Manfred Jelinski, Angelika and Harald Lundt.

Competition

Rudeness

Yes now the moment you've all been waiting for. The chance to win a sparkling (!) new NEKROMANTIK 2 T-shirt with a front and back print.

All you have to do is tell me the names of THREE short films featured on the HOT LOVE cassette, with the exception of HOT LOVE ! Okay ? Well get cracking and send your answers to the editorial address on PAGE 2 before December 1st.

The lucky winner will be notified by post and should recieve the shirt as an early, and bloody good, Christmas present.

KILLING MOON #2 will include Bruce Campbell and Guy (BBFC) Phelps interviews; The films of Roman Polanski; More Hong Kong Phooey; The Wicker Man; Werewolf and the Yeti; The Exorcist; The Final Nightmare and more crap! Available January '92 Order Now £1:50 (INC P+P) to A. Low at the Editorial Address....

by Stuart Taylor

Killing Eye

It is generally considered acceptable in society nowadays to pierce the odd hole into your body, whether this be the ears, nose or whatever! Then let's not forget acupuncture - a "relaxing" process whereby the idea is to pierce your skin in as many places as possible, and, well, erm relax (sort of like a portable bed-of-nails!). Acupuncture looks painful although it's never done Doug Bradley much harm now has it??

Filmmakers worldwide have taken advantage of this 'piercing' past-time we so much enjoy. No, I'm not talking about the nose and ears now; they offer much more interesting places in which you might like to try out a new hole-in-the-body. A favourite of mine, which I've never really been tempted to try out personally: The Eye!

So, come with me people and let's relive some of the more interesting penetrable events the eye has experienced over the past sixty years or so(in the interests of piercing tastes os course!). Let's get the (eye)ball rolling with an early scene which I recently had the pleasure of view-ing:

Armin brunner's silent film from 1928, UN CHIEN ANDALOU. Now, this film's a little muddled to me. David Lynch ,by comparison, has nothing on this guy. Anyhow, I get the basic impression it's about some bloke who goes a bit potty when there's a full moon. He also keeps an army of ants - in the palm of his hand(literally) and enjoys slicing eyes with a handy cut-throat razor when he gets the chance. Well, some woman's game for this. She sits down on a chair readily provided for her. The ant bloke quickly approaches her from behind, produces the razor and with a masterful flick of the hand, moves it left to right across her left eye. A quick close-up - this is pretty gory and a well made effect for a 1928 film! Impressive.

Probably the most notorious eye scene can be found in ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS(1979).

Mrs Maynard(Olga Karlatos) is rather unfortunate as she happens to live on an island full of zombies who wander mindlessly around all day. Anyhow, after a nice shower, there she is drying off in her little wooden house, when who would want to invite themselves in ? None other than one of those warped-out zombies. He tries knocking on the door(!) but either forgets his own strengh or doesn't realise that the door, like the rest of the house is made, of wood and shatters it. Olga seems to resist his temptation to enter. Maybe it's because he doesn't realise his own strength? Anyhow, while he continues to prolongly shatter the door, she moves toward it trying to block his entrance! Dumb move, Olga! (Un)fortuneately, our zombie friend has grabbed you around the hair and begins pulling you into the door; more specifically toward one of the bamboo sticks, which is now conviently sticking out of the door, and directly in line of - oh no, it can't be - yes, your eye!! The inevitable happens and your right eye sadly makes contact with the spike. But does our zombie friend stop there? Nah, he continues to pull further, thus almost shattering the eye into many pieces. Generally quite messy!

In BLOODY BIRTHDAY(1980), Debbie Brody(Elizabeth Hoy) is generally your everyday American brat. Born under a total solar eclipse seems to have had an effect on her. She has decided to make use of a hole she earlier poked into her sister, Beverly's, bedroom. What for? Why with the intention of killing her.

Armed with bow and arrow, Debbie goes trundling off to the hole, intending to fire the arrow at her good sister. Unfortuneately, she makes too much of a racket, which in turn attracts Beverly to have a peek through. While she's having a little nose, debbie fires the arrow from the other side. Bingo!, a hole in one. William Tell would be proud of her. A successful shot, directly in the left eye.

It's nice to see that John Morghen(as Mike in CANNIBAL FEROX (1980)) appreciates the true eye-dealistic nature of eye removing. he holds special classes for all his friends in the Amazon. In this instance he picks on a Portugese(does that make him poor-tugese?) fellow, for use in his practical experiment. Then, whilst producing a handy hunting knife, making sure it's extra sharp, he places it near this guy's left eye. A quick bit of poking around, and yes indeed, the knife's right in there. A quick flick of the wrist, Mike's able to remove the eye from the socket, and if so desires can take it home and produce it at parties. Pity you won't get the chance, eh Mike ?

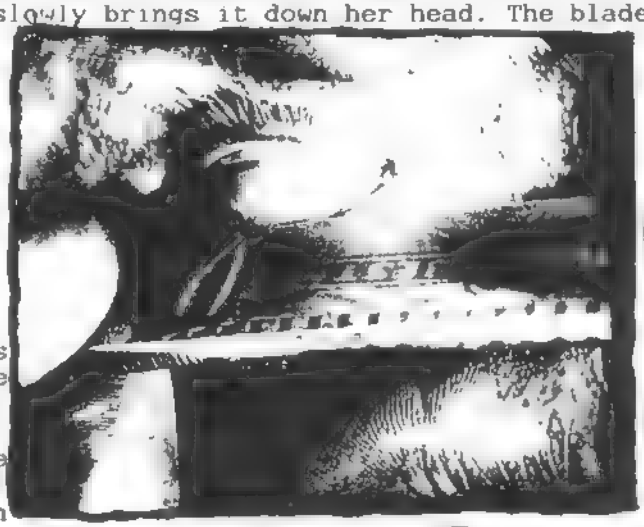
Another scene to look out for is in DEAD AND BURIED(1981) where George Le Moyne(Christopher Allport), decides to take some scenic shots of Potters Buff. Armed with camera(and film?), if he's lucky he might catch the odd bit of scenery. If he's really lucky though he might catch Lisa Blount, who's willing to

undress for a more artistic pose. This doesn't go down too well with fellow residents of Potter's Buff though. They appear on the scene, attach him firmly to a trawler net and set him alight. George survives this mere smoulder though, and begins a long(albiet scoulded) recovery in hospital. Whilst there Ms. Blount decides to pay him a visit, and brings with her a gift - a syringe, to "make you feel even better"...!

A firm jab with the excellence and provision of Jocky Wilson, she firmly pokes the syringe through his bandages into his left eye. I get the impression here she doesn't really like old George.

George Eastman/Luigi Montefiore has never really had much luck has he? In amongst the tortorous eye treatment. Being the manical beast he is(his second outiing as such in Joe D'Amato's ABSURD (1981)), then I'm sure he doesn't mind. The finale of the film has been reached. Once again we're here at the "original" idea of a girl being persued by the maniac killer(although this is a bit odd as the girl is rather strange and George is meant to be unstoppable!). But oh dear George, silly you - a slap on the wrists I think. Our heroine this time happens to be an expert in the technical drawing field and always carries a spare compass around(no, not the NSEW variety) in the event of being attacked. George quickly bounces on her but she's much too fast for the aging actor! Armed with compass, she lunges for his eye. Hooray, a bulls(eye); compass sticking from his right retina, we, the viewers, are submitted to even more suffering - yes, 30 seconds of Mr. Eastman attempting to sound like he's in pain.

On a similar eye-slicing basis(but a vertical one as opposed to a horizontal one) to UN CHIEN ANDALOU, Kitty(the typical Italian portrayal of American hooker) is into pretty kinky stuff in NEW YORK RIPPER(1982). the ripper himself decides initially to tie her up. Then, as if taught by Paul Daniels himself, produes a razor-blade. Not wanting to ideally avert from the subject he decides to cut her - firstly here, then there, oh and then there too, oh and why not the odd eye? He places the blade on the right side of her forehead and slowly brings it down her head. The blade continues to approach her eye. Ironically her right pupil follows it. The ripper manages to calculate the exact midpoint intersection of her eye, as he slices it directly in two, vertically, down the middle. If I were you Kitty, I'd give this guy a miss next time!



The opening sequences to HALLOWEEN III(1982) are actually quite odd. this time Micheal Myers is replaced by some daft male robots. Harry Grimbridge (Al Berry) has wound up in

hospital as a result of an earlier encounter with several such robots. Whilst he calmly sleeps in the joyous surroundings of a hospital bed, he has a visitor. No not Lisa Blount(no such luck!), but yet another smartly dressed robot. Mr Robot obviously has clear intentions. He covers Harry's mouth with his left hand. Using the robotic talents of his right hand, he firmly places forefinger and thumb into Harry's eyes(yes, both of them - the only dual stabbing I could find), and then proceeds to remove his hands and wipe the gooey stuff on the nearest bed curtain. How rude!

In HENRY:PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER(1986), Otis(Tom Towles) and Henry(Micheal Rooker) are in a little scuffle over Otis' sister Becky(Tracy Arnold). Infact, whilst these two are wrestling we see, via a nifty bit of camera swapping, Becky grab her ever ready steel comb.

Panning back to the wrestlers, we see Otis produce his handgun (did I mention the handgun?). Aided by some excellently thought out dialogue("Adios, Mother Fucker!"), I can only assume his intention wa5to shoot poor old Henry. Becky, though, has probably read the script and knows what's really meant to happen. Almost immediately she pops the comb in and out of Otis' right eye, thus causing much pain. Tom Towles at this stage does a very accurate impression of George Eastman, by continually warbling out a primitive groaning noise.

Knitting can be fun.

Danny(Eugene Glazer), the supermarket owner in INTRUDER(1988) is in for an interesting night. After all he has just sold the store and thus sacked all his staff. Add to this the manic deranged person who's roaming around the store, popping people off with every oppurtunity. well, Danny, you're next.

The "killer" creeps up behind Danny, who's busy fiddling the books in his office, and at the earliest opportunity grabs him firmly around the head. With his free hand he begins to push Danny towards a metal paper spike. Danny tries to call for help but fails miserably(what a surprise, eh?). with full force, the killer wops Danny's left eye firmly into the spike. Another little push on the head just to make sure the full piercing effect is appreciated. Watch out for this eye in a later scene - it somehow appears in a jar!!

Well, I hope this insight into the world of jabbing the eye with as many sharp objects as plausible has been of some use to somebody! Please keep an eye out for more, indeed keep a lookout for these;they're worth seeing. I'd be lying if I said most, if not all, of them did produce the odd squirmly expression from myself. But then again, I guess it's in our best interests to warn you of such grotesque things, eh ?

THE SAM RAIMI INTERVIEW

by Alex J. Low

In 1982, with friends and a minuscule budget of around $300,000 Sam Raimi created one of the goriest, most-exciting, funniest horror films of all time, THE EVIL DEAD. Raimi is currently busy at work on the third EVIL DEAD film entitled ARMY OF DARKNESS, which will be released next year.

Raimi begun his fascination with film making at a very young age. Around twelve years old he was using a video camera principally as a way of telling jokes. From there he went on to make many shorts, including "Six Months To Live" with Bruce Campbell in High School and "The Happy Valley Kid" with producer-pal Robert Tapert at college. If you get the chance to see these rare short films take it as they are excellent pieces of entertainment and forerunners to the splendid and unusual techniques that make Sam Raimi one of the most creative film makers of today. It was indeed the thirty-minute short "Within The Woods" that Raimi and co. eagerly showed to as many financers as they possibly could to make the now classic THE EVIL DEAD - the story of five fun-loving American kids who decide to spend a weekend in an isolated cabin in the woods.

It's a simple tale of love,evil spirits, death, dismemberment and blood - lots of blood! For in the cabin they discover a tape recorder and the Book Of The Dead which contain the words that can resurrect the dead. One of the spells is recited and the spirits of the dead awaken and begin to possess the woods and then, one by one, our helpless heroes.

THE EVIL DEAD stood out from most low-budget horror films of the time because it was fairly well acted, contained some amazing special and make-up effects lots of gore and was direct ed with splendid flair and originality by the man in question.

Five years later Raimi and crew made the long-awaited sequel EVIL DEAD II:DEAD BY DAWN and once again covered the screen in blood and goo. EVIL DEAD II had over ten times the budget of the original and this showed with better more extravagant special

effects and some brilliant visuals. The only quibble with this funnier, less scary follow-up was that it was more a remake than a sequel but this is not a fault of the actual film as one must consider how few people would have seen the original.

Sadly the film was not the commercial success producer Dino DeLaurentis had hoped for. In America this was at least in part due to the film's self-imposed X-rating which meant(as I'm sure most readers know) that major cinema chains would not play the film as an X puts a movie in the same league as porn. However, it faired well in Europe and, like the original installment became a big video hit.

In between the two EVIL DEAD epics, Raimi ventured into slapstcik comedy with CRIMEWAVE. An over-the-top, zany piece of film making , CRIMEWAVE shows more than any of Raimi's feature films to date just how much he is influenced by the Three Stooges. Originally titled THE XYZ MURDERS this ambitous project was Raimi's first major film, backed by Embassy Pictures. Co-written by Raimi and the equally talented Joel and Ethan Coen(BLOOD SIMPLE,RAISING ARIZONA)it tells the offbeat tale of two rat exterminators who also happen to be compulsive murderers on the loose in Downtown Detroit. Even with some truly witty moments and several delightful and colourful scenes, CRIMEWAVE was a disappointment and the whole OTTishness became somewhat hard to bare after a while. It was also a bad experience for Raimi himself as the studio interfered with the finished film and as Mr. Raimi would like to forget this so will we.

Sam Raimi's forth film, DARKMAN, is in my opinion his most accomplished work yet. Liam Neeson gave an excellent performance as a scientist who has almost perfected synthetic skin and ends up using the process on himself once he is defaced by an evil property dealer. As I'm sure you've all seen it(and if you havent - why not? I want to know!) I can only advise you to watch it again and again, as it only gets better with repeated viewing and you'll spot something new every time(whether it be an in-joke or John Landis's cameo appearence). DARKMAN shows that with a bigger budget and a bigger cast Raimi doesn't collapse under all the pressure but simply excels.

Raimi is not only a talented film maker he is a talented film star making his name as a rather decent actor, mostly in friends' movies. He played the Manson-type killer in Josh Becker's underrated THOU SHALT NOT KILL...EXCEPT..., where he hammed it up so much you really started to believe he was mad. He was also the unfortunate butcher who got butchered in Scott Spiegel's INTRUDER and the newscaster in MANIAC COP. Most notably he was recently credited as the "Snickering Gunman" in Joel and Ethan Coen's excellent gangster-thriller MILLER'S CROSSING(the performance of his career where he mercilessly guns a man down and subsequently gets blown to pieces!), not tomention the Hitchcock-like cameo appearences he makes in all his own movies.

As mentioned earlier Raimi is currently at work on ARMY OF DARKNESS. The continuation of THE EVIL DEAD saga it sees our antihero Ash(Bruce Campbell) transported to the Middle Ages to become the saviour of the people. The film certainly sounds promising with make-up effects being handled by Alterian Studios

"Don't worry dear - one of my arms is bigger than the other"

Arm-wrestling a bed post isn't much fun

and KNB Effects who done DARKMAN, and boasting a bigger budget than any previous Sam Raimi movie.

Raimi simply loves films and film making and is now, quite rightly, regarded as one of the most talented visual story tellers in the world. He is a hope for all aspiring film makers, having never attending film school and getting where he is today by sheer determination and hard work. Basically, we love you Sam!

COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT "EVIL DEAD III:ARMY OF DARKNESS"

ARMY OF DARKNESS is a tale of love, laughter, and terror. A thrilling, chilling, rock 'em, sock 'em, rollercoaster ride of screaming terror. The story of one man's plummer to the depths of despair and his rise to greatness. Yet at the same time it's a kind of cheesy B picture fit only for the worst grind houses in neighbourhoods so bad I wouldn't send my attorney into.

WHAT PLANS DO YOU HAVE FOR AFTER "ARMY OF DARKNESS" ?WILL THERE BE A FOLLOW UP TO "DARKMAN" WITH BRUCE CAMPBELL ?

After ARMY OF DARKNESS, I will be writing an adventure picture and a comedy. Currently no follow up to DARKMAN is planned.

WHO IS DOING THE SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR "ARMY OF DARKNESS" ?

There are many different EFX groups. In the make-up field: Alterian Studios heade up by Tony Gardner, and KNB Effects headed up by Bob Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger. In the world of mechanical EFX: Vern Hyde, Gary Jones and a group of Detroiters create the physical mechanical illusions on the set. They include lightweight, plastic chainsaws that run and smoke but are safe; flying rigs and explosions, etc. The optical EFX are supervised by Bill Mesa who employs the Introvision process to achieve optical FX illusions. Peter Kleinow is doing the Stop Motion Animation.

ARE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE MAKING MOVIES WITH YOUR OWN MONEY OR A STUDIO'S ?

Money is money. Money helps. It allows a film maker more shooting time, more effects, larger orchestrations for the music track and the like. However, like a diseased kiss it brings along

its own strain of plague. When the studios give it to you, it feels good at first, but later the symptoms begin to appear. They exact their pound of flesh creatively.

Don't play pool with this gal...

APART FROM "THE THREE STOOGES" WHAT ELSE HAS INSPIRED AND INFLUENCED YOU ?

Like all writers, I have been influenced by my own banal life.

HAVE YOU ANY FAVOURITE FILMS OR DIRECTORS ?

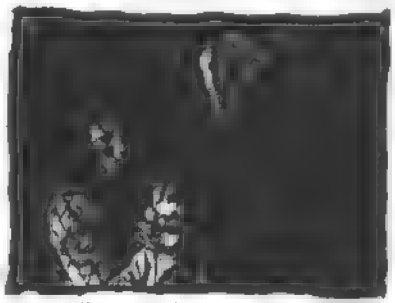
Some of my favorite movies are:THE TREASURE OF SIERA MADRE, THE HAUNTING, TAXI DRIVER, APOCALYPSE NOW, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, PATHS OF GLORY, METROPOLIS, LA STRADA, A TRIP TO THE MOON, WITNESS TO THE PROSECUTION and the list goes on. I like most movies I see. I'm a very easily entertained audience member. Some of my favorite directors are John Houston, Alfred Hitchcock, Kurosawa, Joel and Ethan Coen and Fritz Lang.

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR VERY GOOD AND VERY FUNNY BIT PART IN JOEL AND ETHAN COEN'S "MILLER'S CROSSING" ?

I was very lucky to get that part. I have known the Coen brothers since 1980 when Joel was an assistant editor on THE EVIL DEAD and Ethan was a statistical accountant at Macy's. We have written together and have been the best of friends for many years. I believe they felt I had a puggish face that worked for that particular moment of the film. Plus, I told them that I would wring their miserable necks if they didn't give me the role.

WHAT IS IT LIKE FOR YOU BEING A DIRECTOR HAVING TO GO IN FRONT OF CAMERA AND TAKE DIRECTIONS ?

I learn a lot about directing by being an actor. To properly direct a crew you must have a certain understanding of all jobs, so you can better direct them.



Not the man he used to be

WHERE DO YOU THINK HORROR MOVIES OF RECENT YEARS HAVE GONE OFF THE RAILS ? THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE MANY SCARES AROUND JUST A LOT OF SPECIAL EFFECTS.

ARMY OF DARKNESS

I don't know. It's possible that when leaving the theater after watching a good scene of suspense, we don't remember the construction of the sequence as much as a particular moment of visual interest. These are usually the special effects moments. As they are the most vivid single image. So we forget that it wasn't just the special effects that thrilled us. Some film makers, and I'm guilty of this, just concentrate on the climax without properly building a solid foundation beneath it. These climaxes are sometimes just special effects shots.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET TOGETHER WITH BRUCE CAMPBELL, SCOTT SPIEGEL, AND OTHER FRIENDS FROM THE DAYS OF YOUR INDEPENDENT MOVIES TO WORK ON A MAJOR BUDGET MOVIE ?

Sure. We work together on a lot of things that never see the flickering light of the movie screen. Currently Scott Spiegel is directing a comedy entitled THE NUTTY NUT. I think it should be a blast. Scott, Bruce, Ron Zwang and myself have all worked on the script. He is production right now.

AND FINALLY, THE INEVITABLE QUESTION : WILL THERE BE AN "EVIL DEAD IV" ?

Please be seated. I have some bad news. It is very possible that the main character, Ash, will not survive ARMY OF DARKNESS. I wish it wasn't so, but he's in a pretty tough jam and it looks bleak. Let's hope and pray.

Keep your fingers crossed that Ash survives. Maybe we'll find out more on this and other ARMY OF DARKNESS stuff in the Bruce ('Ash')Campbell interview next issue(Hint, Hint!! - buy the damn thing!). By the way, UIP plan to open ARMY OF DARKNESS in the U.K. late next summer, or even sooner!!

Make-Up F/X

by

Christopher Deane

CHRISTOPHER DEANE IS AN UP AND COMING MAKE-UP EFFECTS ARTIST BASED IN THE U.K. WHOSE CREDITS INCLUDE "BLACK ROSES", "DEADLY SPAWN" AND BRIEF WORK ON TOM SAVINI'S "NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD"

The make up industry always looks at new talent and fresh ideas, although it's a somewhat closed industry to outsiders. If you have talent and ambition you can open doors with your portfolio. If you have no portfolio as yet you are going to have to start at the beginning. Do the ground work. Prosthetics is a technical area and you'll need to practise at it until it becomes second nature to you.

Firstly, consider if you have the ability and talent to sculpt old age faces, demons, zombies and more. to start you will need to practise modeling clay and creating life like features. You'll need a stone positive of a face, on to which you will model your design(Stone positives and a complete guide are all included in Lee Baygan's "Techniques Of Three Dimensional Make-ups", available from most large bookstores or by order.)

Your sculpting will have to be realistic and natural. follow the contours of your positive, practise until you are happy with your finished look, complete with wrinkles and textured finish. You will need at least ten 12" x 8" pictures for your portfolio, all different - vary them. Practise with all the different chemicals and be aware that some are not good for your skin or to inhale the fumes of them.

You will be able to find most of the needed chemicals from threatre, TV and film suppliers. Alginates impression material is available from dental suppliers, although bandage wraps from pottery suppliers is a little cheaper as it's in bulk.

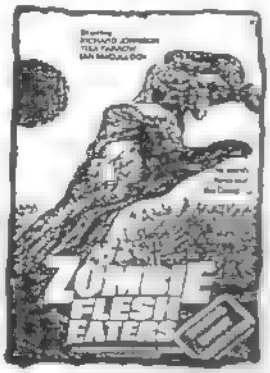
Start at the beginning and practise and practise. You'll teach yourself along the way as well as learning new and quicker techniques. you won't become a professional overnight but if you are ambitous you will get there in the end, and have fun doing so.

There are colleges in the U.K. that deal in this kind of work. More so in the U.S.A. but it is expensive there. My advice would be to learn what you can and seek employment with professional artists once you have your folio completed. Los Angeles has many schools to choose from, as does New York, but it's your choice as to how you proceed in prosthetics.

I myself have travelled abroad, studied hard and learnt to a high level. YOU can do it if you want to. There are a lot of people not in the top ten but who are working in the business. Next time I will include hints on applications and so on in creating various works and hopefully help you along the way.

IT'S OBSCENE!

by Alex Low

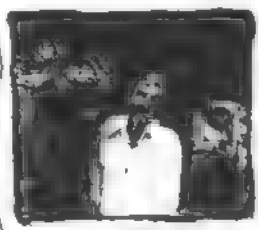


What better way to start our rundown of "obscene" videos than with Lucio Fulci's "Zombie Flesh Eaters". Released in the aftermath of George A. Romero's "Dawn Of The Dead", it was put out as "Zombie 2" in Italy(as "Dawn" was there called "Zombie") and is one of the best imitations of Romero's film.

The daughter of a famous scientist(Tisa Farrow) goes to the Caribbean in search of her father, who has mysteriously disappeared. Accompanied by journalist Peter West(Ian McCulloch) they on the way meet an American ethnologist and a young female photographer. The quartet's first encounter with the menancing creatures of the undead occurs underwater, where Susan, the photographer, is saved by a zombie. However our flesh-eating friends are more desperate to kill violently when the four arrive on the mysterious Matul Island.

In one sense Fulci has created a horror masterpiece. "Zombie Flesh Eaters" is one of the most notorious, infamous and goriest films of all time. Viewed in it's uncut version it is a splendid barrage of tearing flesh and galloons upon galloons of red-stuff, and is particularly well filmed. On the other hand it contains some of the worst acting and music ever contained on celluloid. Ian McCulloch gives the only notable performance as he breezes through this, one of his countless low-budget Italian horror films. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that this is one of the most menacing gorefeasts ever made. One of the good things about "Zombie Flesh Eaters" is that although it is exceedingly violent it never once falls into the category of exploitive, sickening, tasteless violence of say the truly awful "Last House On The Left" or "I Spit On Your Grave".

At times the film seems to relish in it's own stupidity and although the story line is always there it never intrudes on the best thing about this movie - the gore. The 'strong uncut version' is one of the nastiest nasties and this film should be(if only it legally could be) part of every horror fans collection. Beware of VIPCO's wretched 'cut' version. This print was passed by the BBFC with an 'X' and whether they or the distributor made the cuts they certainly made enough of them. All major gore scenes are virtually edited out and the stunning pre-credit sequence of the scientist shooting the zombie in the head is gone entirely ! If you see this version you'll wonder what all the fuss was about, especially over the classic splinter-in-the-eye scene.



"Zombie Flesh Eaters" spawned many an imitation itself and Fulci recently completed the tame sequel "Zombie 3" which is no way near as good or gory, although is worth a look. Overall, "Zombie Flesh Eaters" is one of the better films on the "banned" list and one of the goriest.

Sick and tired of the incessant deluge of sanitised Western crap ?
Feeling in need of a good shot of adrenalin and a change of pace ?
Then what you want is a neat dose of...

Hong Kong Phooey

PART ONE OF A THREE PART ARTICLE ON THE ASIAN CINEMA PHENOMENA
By Griffin A. Madill

Recent months have seen the dramatic emergence of a new trend in UK fan circles. Perhaps you've noticed the growing demand in the underground circuit for this uniquely wild approach to the old and much loved genres. Classifieds clamour for it in the small press and the collectors give it high priority on their 'wants' lists. Asian horror, fantasy and action-thrillers are BIG at the moment and the craze shows no signs of abating. To find out the why and wherefore of this subject, we simply look back to the Hong Kong season screened by Channel 4 last Christmas and highlighted by showings of Tsui Hark's ZU:WARRIORS FROM THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN, Samo Hung's ENCOUNTERS OF THE SPOOKY KIND and Wong Kee Hung's utterly marvelous MR. VAMPIRE. The rest of the season consisted of ROUGE,ESPIRIT D'AMOUR and SPIRITUAL LOVE(rather drab, slushy numbers, all of them). Each broadcast was introduced by Jonathan 'Woss the Boss' Ross, who months earlier had initiated much of the current interest with his INCREDIBLY STRANGE FILM SHOW, one edition of which concentrated on the Hong Kong scene in general and prominent director/producer/writer/actor Tsui Hark in particular.

The Channel 4 season was preceded in 1988 by a BBC 2 showing of the hugely successful A CHINESE GHOST STORY(co-directed by Hark, with assistance from Ching Siu-Tung) and closely followed by an early Hark directorial effort, THE BUTTERFLY MURDERS.

Tsui Hark is responible for much of the product on the market and has evolved from directing purile crap like MAD MISSION/ACES GO PLACES to big-budget fantasy(ZU) and grim, harrowing thrillers (DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE aka DANGEROUS ENCOUNTERS). Tsui is more often seen in his producing capacity these days, having formed his own production company - Golden Princess Film Workshop - and nurtured the talents of other young directors, such as the aforementioned Siu-Tung and the awesomely talented Johnny Woo.

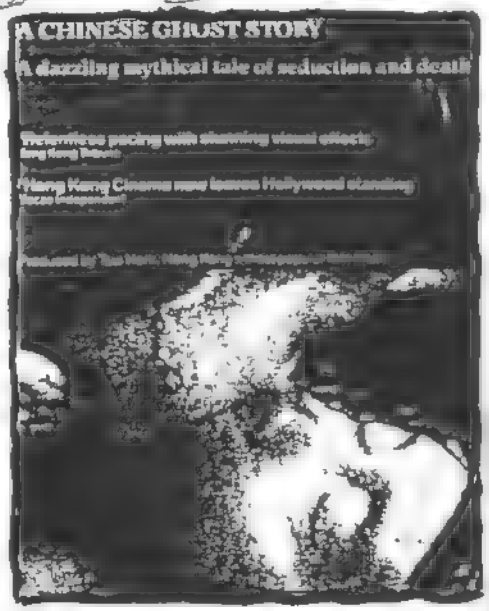
In this article I intend to gloss over somewhat the bigger and better known films like Tsui's GHOST STORY and ZU, in favour of the smaller, more obscure gems, though both the above films have been greatly influential within their homeland. One of these lesser-known classics is DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE, a brutal and downbeat affair that emphasises the squalor and overcrowded living conditions in Hong Kong. Originally intended as a searing indictment of the

suppression of freedom in Hong Kong, with explicit political commentary, the film was(unsurprisingly) neutered by government censors and practically the entire film had to be re-written, reshot and drastically reedited into it's present form. Viewed today the film still comes across as a cruel thriller about inner city juvenile deliquency populated with reprehensible characters who are doomed from the start. The video version once available in Britain (an early Intervsion release) featured a number of brief cuts, mostly involving the all-too-real murder and mutilation of several mice and a cat. These scenes add nothing to the film and in it's cut print the film is highly recommended. From me at least.

A later film, WE ARE GOING TO EAT YOU, absurdly shows up on some fans' lists as KUNG FU CANNIBALS. Under any title the film is an enjoyable shocker with plenty of broad humour thrown in, about an isolated village in rural China presided over by a horde of masked butchers who dwell in a kind of fortified monastery. These cleaver-swinging bandits supply the cannibalistic villagers with fresh meat courtesy of any traveller stupid enough to wander into the vicinity. The film moves along at a frantic pace, punctuated by the occasional flash of mild gore and is, on the whole, a remarkably entertaining diversion.

Produced by Hark and directed by John Woo in 1986, A BETTER TOMORROW achieved a good degree of success in Hong Kong(where it made it's star Chow Yun-Fat, a major box-office sensation), but nose dived when given a sparsely distributed UK video release on RCA/Columbia in 1990. The RCA tape is now quite a collector's item, due to it's rarity. The film is a tough gangster thriller largely set in the activities of Hong Kong's underworld of organised crime. The principal characters are Ho, a counterfeiter for the syndicate; MArk, his ultra-cool colleague and best friend(Yun-Fat) and Ho's brother Kit, a police academy graduate who is unaware of his brother's illicit dealings. When a Triad scam goes wrong, Ho is caught by the police and jailed, shaming his brother who disowns him. Mark avenges his friend by blowing away the guys who set him up but is maimed in the shootout and so loses his usefulness to the syndicate's vicious boss. Ho is eventually released from prison and decides to try and go straight, but the syndicate refuse to leave him alone and wind up murdering his father. Cue for a spectacular shoot-em-up climax pitting Ho, Kit and the now down and out Mark against the Triad's firepower. Despite the fact that the two leads are dangerous mobsters, the film attains a touching 'buddy' quality and the action scenes(particularly Mark's vengeful slaghter in a Japanese style sushi parlour)are fabulously staged.

The success of A BETTER TOMORROW spawned a sequel, again directed by Woo and produced by Hark, which is a more fastmoving, kinetic film than it's predecessor, with Ho being recruited by the



HK drugs police as an undercover agent to flush out his old mentor, a one-time cocaine baron. Since Yun-Fat's character was blown to pieces at the finale of the first film, he appears here as Mark's brother, a tough -guy restaurant owner being hassled by the American mafia. That, basically, is the plot, but its served up with plenty of dirty dealings and a couple of extraordin -ary shoot-outs.

Hark took up the directing reins for A BETTER TOMORROW 3, which is actually a prequel of sorts set in Saigon ,1973, the last days of the Vietnam war. This is even more emotionally rewarding than the previous outings, especially for the epic finale which is more akin to Oliver Stone's PLATOON than the Woo films. The action is there to be sure, but it takes a back seat to the heartfelt political elements detailing the turmoil in the city and their effects on Saigon's immigrant population, in particular the hero's Chinese ex-patroit father. Though silly at times this is a glorious film that should not be missed, especially if you get the chance to see it on the big screen.

In 1989 Woo and Hark collaborated again, as director and producer respectively, for THE KILLER(now on Palace video for around a tenner), with Yun-fat as the freelance hit-man of the title, Jeffrey Chow. Here, the creative talents ditched the thought ful pacing of A BETTER TOMORROW and adopted a breakneck, relentless approach with more ultra-violent gunplay than any dozen Hollywood action movies in the DIE HARD vein. Try to imagine an entire film like the climatic twenty minute seige in SCARFACE and you may have some perception of what we're talking about. THE KILLER is, I believe John Woo's masterpiece, incorporating truly exhilarating action scenes and breathtaking visuals. Indeed the violence freqe-uently looks truly beautiful without overly glorifying it. This is a feat only ever accomplished by really talented and sensitive directors like Woo(or Argento, for example) and contributes greatly to the overall look and feel of the film.

Since THE KILLER, Woo has directed a remarkable number of similarly themed 'heroic bloodshed' epics, among them BULLET IN THE HEAD,KILLER ANGELS, JUST HEROES and HEROES SHED NO TEARS.I'll be looking at as many of these as possible in my review update in part three of this article.

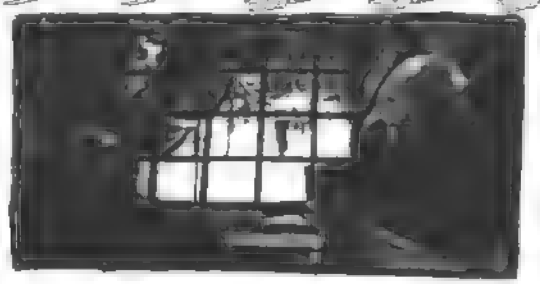
Hark meanwhile seems to be keeping fairly quiet, having only one new dirctorial effort that I'm aware of, THE BIG HEAT, about which no-one apparently knows anything! His face crops up in small parts in a good few Hong Kong films. Look out for the slightly built, bearded young man with glasses and a rather large nose appearing in IN THE LINE OF DUTY 2(which confused a lot of people when released in the UK as POLICE ASSASSINS 2. Now the fourth film in the series has been released here as IN THE LINE OF DUTY 1')as a small time crook, and in A BETTER TOMORROW as a music school teacher.

Ching Siu-Tung recently completed A CHINESE GHOST STORY 2,

which is still largely unseen in this country, but retains a rather low profile; at least on these sandy shores.

And so ends the lesson for today. In the next issue I'll be vivsecting a further sampling of Hong Kong insanity, including Samo Hung, MR VAMPIRE, TIGER CAGE 2, more Chow Yun-Fat movies, plus the horror and fantasy market in Japan, taking in the "Baby CARt to Hades" series and the world of violent Asian comics.

So, until then keep stirring the rice.



THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM

A rotten corpse is removed from it's tomb and suspended in mid-air. The inquistor reads aloud the dead man's crime and his punishment - twenty lashings of the whip. With each lash a piece of the skeleton falls off until it is completely dismembered. The bones are then crushed into insignificance.

This powerful opening sequence lets the viewer know exactly what is in store - one of the bizarrest and best horror films in quite a while. THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM marks the welcome return to the genre of Stuart Gordon and reunites him with Charles band whose new company, Full Moon Pictures, produced the film.

Based on the story by Edgar Allan Poe the plot concerns the sadistic doings of Tornes DeTorquemada(Lance Henriksen), leader of the Spanish Inquistion and one of the vilest mass murderer's history known. DeTorquemada falls in love with one of his prisoners, Maria and knowing he cannot have her he tortures her and her husband who is to be the first victim of "the ultimate tool of torture". I won't reveal anymore in fear of spoiling the magnificent story for those of you unfamiliar with it.

THE PIT... has a great many things going for it. There's a fantastic orchestral score by Richard Band; the costumes are beautiful and the settings remarkable; there's also lots of silly, sick humour. Undoubtedly the best thing about the film is Lance Henriksen who gives the performance of his career, proving that he is one of the finest charcter actors in cinema today.

The torture devices are a sadomasochists dream and although the film is not very violent the scenes of torture are realistic, disturbing and quite squeamish. The climax is blood-drenched and real edge-of-your-seat stuff.

However, the film isn't without flaws. The characters of Maria and her husband(played respectively by Rona DeRicci and Jonathan Fuller) often come across as silly and irritating, thereby making it harder to sympathise with them, and on occasion the film seems a little too ambitous and over-dramatically staged for it's own good. Perhaps with the latter it should be remembered that Gordon did direct off-Broadway plays for many years.

THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM is in my view Stuart gordon's most accomplished film yet and maybe now he will get the money to film his epic adaptation of Lovecraft's SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH. Fans will be divided over THE PIT...,but when it comes to it I loved it.(USA/Italy,97 mins,Stuart Gordon) ALEX J. LOW

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1990)

The remake of George Romero's classic 1968 horror film NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was brought about primarily as a financial project since the makers were conned by the original's distributors and hardly made a penny from it's massive world wide success. Ironically they didn't make much this time either as the film completely flopped at the box office.

For the most part this is a straight remake once again offering no definite explanation as to why the dead are returning to life with a craving for living flesh,but there are some interesting - and irritating - changes. The most interesting come at the end which is somewhat different, however I won't spoil it for those of you who haven't yet seen it as the finale is about the only good aspect of this movie. Infact the only change I feel I can mention without ruining any particular "shock" of the movie, is the change made to Barbara. She is no longer the shocked, helpless, silent character she was. No, here Barbara has become a tough,gun-toting, in control woman. This is a fair point if Romero was trying to reflect the changes women have made in society over the last thirty years, but the new Barbara simply does not work. Personally I could not give a toss what happened to Barbara twenty minutes into the film.

This is infact the general problem with all the characters in the remake - you simply do not care enough, if at all, for them. This is a flaw of the script sadly, as the performances are good, especially from the exceptionally promising Tom Towles(Otis in HENRY)as Cooper, but Cooper is not as detestable as he should be.

On the technical side, Tom Savini does a commendable job as director(although this was probably the wrong movie to debut on)and the make-up effects are good if somewhat played down. But where is the gore ? I know this was made with an 'R-rating' in mind and they didn't want a gorefest but some more blood-letting, brain munching and effects sequences would have livened this rather tame, boring remake up.

Most genre fans will be disappointed by this, which basically should not have been made. Let's hope that Romero gets back to his real "Dead" trilogy with a final cracker that will make us all happy zombies are still alive and well in Pittsburgh!(USA,1990,90 mins,Tom Savini) ALEX J LOW

Crap Movie - Crap Still

THE DEAD NEXT DOOR

THE DEAD NEXT DOOR is a brilliant homage to zombie films and a great film itself. Production began on this movie four years ago and I never thought I'd see it, but I did - thank Christ!

The zombies have taken over the U.S.(again!) and this time have mangaed to kill the President. Zombie squads have been established to knock-off the undead and a rather mad doctor is working on a serum to reverse the zombification process. Many people, however, want to see the zombies live (brilliant touch) and there's even a religous angle to it all so don't moan there's no storyline!

For such a small budgeted film(around $75,000) the production elements and make-up effects are brilliant and if it's gore you're after there's plenty of throat-tearing, finger-biting and severed tongues to keep you happy. The makers have a great sense of humour too and characters are called Raimi, Savini etc.(what about this for an upfront homage - "I hope we don't loose Sam like we did Romero and King"!!!) The cast of unknowns do well and really give the impression they enjoyed doing this movie.

It has elements of DAWN OF THE DEAD(the zombie swat squads), DAY OF THE DEAD(a not-completely-sane doctor) and even clips from THE EVIL DEAD. This classic hit U.S. video shelves earlier this year but it's unlikely it will ever turn up in the U.K. due to the high blood content but hopefully you'll all get to see this somehow(!) And yes, for those of you pondering over it this is the same DEAD NEXT DOOR Sam Raimi partly financed.

Written, produced and directed by an emmensely talented guy called J.R. BookWalker - if you ever read this J.R. or anyone who knows where I can get in touch with him, let me know please ! A great film which really woke me up(as I saw it at 2 a.m.) and has the longest end credits I can remember seeing on an independent feature - 12 minutes of them. But even the credits are entertaining on this movie. Highly recommended(1990,82 minutes, J.R. Bookwalker)
ALEX J. LOW

Four Flies on Grey Velvet

by Steve Langton

Eavesdrop on a conversation between a couple of Argento fans and you'll hear some wide-ranging and fascinating opinions. Everyone will have his/her own ideas as to the man's finest film, but one title in particular will often be absent from the discussion. Twenty years on from it's making, FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET is still awaiting a British video release. For many people the only chance of catching this film has been the odd screening here and there at various festivals. Given Argento's increasing popularity over here, and the fact that the print has just been sitting on a shelf doing bugger all, this is little short of a disgrace!

FOUR FLIES almost immediately thrusts it's main character Roberto Tobias(Micheal Brandon) into a nightmare world of murder and madness. When Tobias confronts a man who has been trailing him, the ensuing struggle ends...well, lets just say a masked figure photographs the result and it becomes apparent that Tobias is the real target for a twisted killer whose motivations go back many years.

The title of this film refers to a technique in which a special camera attempts to capture the last image on a murder victim's retina, hoping the dead person can actually 'tell' the police who the killer is. Sounds preposterous, but the scene which reveals to Tobias the identity of the murderer(we already know by this stage) successfully achieves suspension of disbelief and almost has you applauding as does the film's ending, shot in slow-motion and quite stunning to behold. Performance wise this is pretty unremarkable, although Brandon(a long way from being Argento's first choice)is quite comfortable with his role.

So, FOUR FLIES successfully marked the end of the first part of Argento's career.His next film FIVE DAYS IN MILAN(1973)saw a complete departure from what had gone before - almost revealing a need for a little breathing space. The "animal trilogy" had been completed and suggested an awesome talent breaking through,a suggestion which proved to be correct three years later with DEEP RED.

Hopefully, FOUR FLIES will show up on video sooner rather than later. Admittedly, it can't claim to represent the cream of Argento's work, but is recommended on many levels. Do I really have to tell you that it's absolutely essential viewing ?

SHORT CUTS

Cleveland Smith : Bounty Hunter

starring Bruce Campbell and Sam Raimi.
written by Josh Becker and Scott Spiegel.
directed by Josh Becker.

The opening shot of this action-adventure-romantic-comedy sees Bruce Campbell as our elusive hero, Cleveland Smith, striking a match in a darkened cavern and then being chased and squashed by a rolling bolder. He(somehow') manages to escape to the woods only to be pursued by the local headhunters. The film is interrupted by a talking fish at this point and when we return to the action, Cleveland accidentally stands on top of a sea-monster and susequently falls into a swamp. Enter the nasty Nazi played by(who else?) Sam Raimi. Clevealnd escapes this nasty bugger's evil clutches by attaching his handy bullwhip to a passing airplane only to be foiled by a towering oak.

From here Cleveland falls into another sticky situation, namely the headhunters' cooking pot and uses his ventriloquist techniques to save Sandy, the damsel in distress. We then discover his quest was for a special pair of pants - the "WADERS OF THE LOST PARK"!! But all does not end well as Cleveland falls into a seemingly bottomles pit and that nasty Nazi returns to capture Sandy. How will Cleveland survive ? What will happen to Sandy ? We may never know.

Obviously a spoof on RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, the dialogue is extremely funny and witty, direction is superb, Campbell is excellent as Cleveland Smith and there's some brill stop-motion effects. A masterpiece of short film making. The opening credits say this is Episode 35, well I only wish I could get to see the other 34!! (USA,1982,9 mins) ALEX J. LOW.

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Scott Speigel's killer-lawnmower-on-the-loose short - TORRO! TORRO! TORRO!

AND

THE BLIND WAITER starring Bruce Campbell.

SO DON'T MISS IT!!!

BILL AND TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY

About a month ago I was one of those annoying people who came back from holiday having seen the movies that it'll take everyone else an age to see. Among them was the totally non-haneous Bill And Ted sequel, BILL AND TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY. For those of you who didn't like the first Excellent Adventure stop reading now. BILL AND TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY continues quite happily in it's predecessors footsteps and I would think that if it is not as good as EXCELLENT it is even better.

A podgy-evil Joss Ackland is out to change the course of history by knocking off our bodacious heroes with robot Bill and Teds. In this he succeeds and Bill and Ted go straight to hell where they meet Death, the Devil, God and a couple of Martians to name but a few.

The jokes never cease, the effects(especially some Bill and Ted versions of our favourite THE EXORCIST) are most triumphant and both Keanu Reeves(Bill) and Alex Winters (Ted) reprise their roles wonderfully, if not easily. In the scenes with Death(which I won't give away) I haven't laughed so much since THEY LIVE ! On landing uncomfortably in Hell Bill and Ted look around to exclaim "Man our album covers really lied to us!" - excellent. Like all good comedies even the end credits are worth staying for and look out for who plays Ted's Granny for a bit of a trivial interest.

Having done everything humanly possible so far I really don't know what there is left for Bill and Ted to do but I'm sure they'll think of something. Party on dudes! (ROSS COLLINS)

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